

Amendments to the Claims

The "Listing of Claims" replaces all prior versions of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-40. (Cancelled)

41. (Currently Amended) A process for producing a cosmetic and/or pharmaceutical active component, said process comprising:

(a) providing a fermentation broth comprising a plant component selected from the group consisting of rice plant constituents, rice plant extracts and mixtures thereof;

(b) inoculating the fermentation broth with a mixture of microorganisms comprising at least one Lactobacillus, at least one Lactococcus, at least one Leuconostoc and at least one yeast; and

(c) fermenting the microorganism-containing fermentation broth to produce an active component.

42. (Cancelled).

43. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 41, wherein the plant component comprises a plant constituent selected from the group consisting of seeds, nodules, roots, leaves, fruits and mixtures thereof.

44. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 41, wherein the plant component is selected from the group consisting of protein concentrates, hydrolyzates and isolates.

45. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 41, wherein the fermentation broth is adjusted to a pH of from 4.5 to 8.5 prior to fermentation.

46. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 41, further comprising pretreating the fermentation broth prior to inoculating, wherein the pretreatment is selected from pasteurization, sterilization and combinations thereof.

47. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 46, wherein the pretreatment is carried out at a temperature of from 60 to 135°C.

48. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 46, wherein the pretreatment is carried out over a period of from 1 to 30 minutes.

49-52. (Cancelled).

53. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 41, wherein the fermentation is carried out at a temperature of from 10 to 47°C.

54. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 41, further comprising separating the active component from the fermented broth, wherein the separation is carried out in a manner selected from the group consisting of centrifugation, filtration, extraction, chromatography and precipitation.

55. (Cancelled).

56. (Currently Amended) A process for producing a cosmetic and/or pharmaceutical active component, said process comprising:

(a) providing a fermentation broth comprising a plant component selected from the group consisting of rice plant constituents, rice plant extracts and mixtures thereof, and subjecting the fermentation broth to a pretreatment selected from ~~pastuerization~~ pasteurization, sterilization and combinations thereof;

(b) inoculating the fermentation broth with a mixture of microorganisms comprising at least one *Lactobacillus*, at least one *Lactococcus*, at least one *Leuconostoc* and at least one yeast;

(c) fermenting the microorganism-containing fermentation broth to produce an active component; and

(d) separating the active component from the fermented broth, wherein the separation is carried out in a manner selected from the group consisting of centrifugation, filtration, extraction, chromatography and precipitation.

57. (Previously Presented) A cosmetic and/or pharmaceutical preparation comprising an active component prepared by the process according to claim 41.

58. (Previously Presented) A cosmetic and/or pharmaceutical preparation comprising an active component prepared by the process according to claim 56.

59. (Previously Presented) The preparation according to claim 57, wherein the active component is present in an amount of from 0.01 to 5% by weight, based on the preparation.

60. (Previously Presented) A method of treating a substrate, said method comprising:
(a) providing a substrate selected from the group consisting of skin and hair; and
(b) contacting the substrate with an active component prepared by the process according to claim 41.